

## REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The claims are 12 to 16.

Claims 12 to 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barton et al. (J. Chem. Soc., Perkin Transactions 1, 1975, pp.1610-1614).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present process is said to be prima facie obvious from Barton and that the recycling of the same material catalysts taught by Barton would be an obvious procedure, absent any unexpected results.

In reply, the precipitation of the catalyst is an unexpected result.

With the molybdate compounds as catalysts, the reaction according to the present application proceeds completely homogeneously as long as  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  is added and it was really surprising that the catalyst precipitates out after all  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  has been added and therefore facilitates unexpectedly removal of the catalyst.

According to the Barton reference the reaction mixture is treated with water and then extracted. There is absolutely no disclosure or suggestion in the Barton reference that the catalyst could precipitate out and could therefore be separated off by simple filtration or centrifugation and further be recycled.

Please see the experimental data in Barton at page 1612 where no mention is made of catalyst recovery nor is any mention made of, as stated above, precipitation of the catalyst after exhaustion of the hydrogen peroxide. Nor is there any disclosure in Barton of hydrogen peroxide exhaustion.

Accordingly, the rejection on Barton is untenable and should be withdrawn.

No further issues remaining, allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any comments or proposals for expediting prosecution, please contact undersigned at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean-Marie AUBRY et al.

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